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MISS ISABEL M. GARNER writes: "The valuable hints in regard to home work in house furnishing, which I have gathered from month to month in the 'Home Workshop,' embolden me to ask a question. Can you suggest any new idea in reference to making a folding screen particularly suited to a country house?" Very tasteful screens, both folding and single, are made of heavy and thick crinkled or corrugated paper or cardboard, decorated with forest leaves. Get a frame of bamboo, gilded or ebonized wood, cherry, walnut or mahogany; stretch the board on the frame and secure it in the usual manner with small tacks. Give the board a coat of size or sizing, and when thoroughly dried, a coat of gold or bronze paint. Gather the leaves when just about to turn (this is a good season of the year for the experiment), arrange on the board to liking, confining them with a needle and stout linen thread, and give them also a coat of bronze or gold paint; or, if frost-tinted leaves are employed, wax them, but do not flatten them to the board. A beautiful screen in illustration is decorated with oak-leaves, gathered in sprays with the acorns attached. The leaves were given a coat of bronze paint and touched up on the edges with gold paint, the cups of the acorns painted in gold and the nuts in bronze. Another screen is decorated with chestnut leaves—the leaves gathered in sprays with the burrs still clinging to them—the burrs half open and showing clusters of nuts. The leaves are painted in bronze, picked out with silver to imitate frost; the burrs are painted in gold, picked out with silver, and the nuts in bronze. A handsome single screen of gilded corrugated board, is decorated with scarlet maple and brilliant yellow hickory leaves, the leaves waxed and arranged in clusters of color after the present approved manner of arranging bouquets of flowers, with a dense bunch of red ash-berries rising above the leaves. An inconvenience in the triple and quadruple screens so decorated is, they can never be closely folded, so that if it be necessary ever to set them aside, it could be only about half folded, and this done very carefully. More convenient and practical decoration is of darned embroidery on loose canvas which comes for that purpose. The best patterns are in flowers of natural or exaggerated size, while the shading can be done to taste or according to judgment. Linen silk thread, purse silk, or crewel can be used, bold effects being aimed at. A folding screen in memory, done in silk embroidery, is held at \$320, while any skilled needlewoman with a sensitive appreciation of natural effects in flowers, or with something of the art idea instinct in her nature, could, for one-eighth of this amount of money, make a screen quite as elegant with the embroidery of Barbour's flax silk. These screens may be lined or backed with India silk, laid in close plaits from the top to the bottom, confined on the edges under some suitable beading.

MRS. F. L. SCOTT. The sameness of which you complain in the painted doors of your house can be remedied by following the suggestions thrown out by the Princess Louise, Marchioness of Lorne, when distressed in like manner in the Government House, at Ottawa, in Canada. To relieve the blank effect here and there on doors, spaces under and between windows, she bethought to decorate them by painting on them bouquets, branches and sprays of flowers. For instance, upon one, the panels of a door, she painted a clambering vine of convolvulus; upon the panel of another door, the stems and branches of apple blossoms; a space underneath a window was made the background for a lakelet upon which floated lotuses in several colors; around the frame of a door we could imagine a climbing branch of eglantine; here a sheaf of gladioli, and there a bunch of roses and lilies, a cluster of pansies or a bed of cyclamens. In the prevalence of flower painting, industrious ladies may do much in oil colors toward the decoration of their houses, and there is no reason why ladies may not also become adepts in fresco painting.

MINNIE F. TAYLOR. You refer to directions published several months ago in regard to making a lichen vase, and ask something about thistle and milkweed balls. Of course you must know it is too late in the season to attempt to make thistle balls; this must be done when the thistles are in the freshness of bloom; but it is just the time in which the pods of the milkweed are in the proper state for the making of the milkweed balls. The method is to open the pod carefully, remove the silken fila-

ments, and shaking off the seeds which are attached, dip the little bunches of filaments that are abstracted in water to prevent their flying away, and when all from a pod are abstracted, gather them up as charily as possible, tie in small bunches, and then tie closely to a wire stem. The result is a fluffy ball, softer than down and more lustrous than silk floss. Thistle balls are made by stripping the stem of the tough green bark and, with a penknife, removing the sepals or scales of the calyx, leaving the filament attached to the cup of the calyx; the purple thread-like petals are then pulled out, and the limp stem to which adheres a white tassel hung where it can be dried by the wind—the white tassel hardening in drying and becoming a soft, white, fluffy ball. These balls of thistle and milkweed, intermingled with dried grasses and cat-tails, serve to make very beautiful bouquets for winter decoration, and bouquets of the kind are exceedingly handsome in lichen vases. We should be glad to know that our lady readers profited by the information thrown out in the June number of the DECORATOR AND FURNISHER in reference to preserving golden rod for winter bouquets. The golden rod gathered in the perfection of its bloom and dried in a dark closet, without placing the stems in water, is said to keep its freshness of color for an indefinite length of time.

MRS. L. M. MILLER. We are pleased to learn that you profited by the suggestions in reference to decorating table linen. You asked to be advised in regard to the shading of fruit designs with flax silk threads. A lady who is interested in all art work which can be incorporated with domestic enterprises, finds invaluable assistance in the proper shading of fruit designs in embroidery, from the cards painted on the bleached muslin or long cloth of the "Fruit of the Loom" brand. There is scarcely a shade of color introduced in these fruit pieces not found in the flax silk threads; and in the embroidery, if several needles are threaded at once with the different colors or shades of color, the work will be greatly facilitated.

MISS FLORENCE CARTER. After hemstitching your square of linen, there will be little difficulty in having stamped upon it almost any design that you may wish. One of the most unique tea table spreads that we have seen has in one corner the figure 5, in floriated design; in the next corner, the letter O entwined with flowers; in the next corner a well represented clock, with the hands of the dial pointing to the proper hour, and in the fourth corner the letter T resting on a spray of flowers—the whole interpreted, 5 o'clock tea. The work is done in shaded silk of fadeless color, while much license and taste could be exercised in the use of colors for work of the kind.

MRS. ETTINGER. The kid patchwork of Russia, seen in covers for sofa pillows and chair-seats, could be very successfully imitated by using unsoiled portions of old kid gloves. Geometrical designs are best for the purpose, nor would the work be either difficult or tedious. The hexagon design seen in patchwork of silk and muslin, in little rose-like figures of six pieces of the same color surrounding a central piece of contrasting color, would be very effective and very satisfactory; and still more pleasing would the hexagon design be if these little rose-like combinations could be surrounded (or joined, as quiltmakers say) with black. The block design formed of three diamond-shaped pieces, is also a good one for kid work. The pieces must be cut with great care, of uniform size and perfectly smooth on the edges; use a glove needle for sewing, and fine strong silk; lay the right side of the pieces together, and over-seam on the wrong side. The Russian kid patchwork is a rare novelty in our country, and some of the designs in which it appears are as complex as they are beautiful. With a little judicious begging of fashionable ladies, who wear their gloves but once or twice before throwing them away, an industrious lady might soon have a collection of kid sufficient for a sofa-cover. Back the kid patchwork on sofa-pillow with morocco or stout satin, joining with a plain seam.

ELIA. Mantel draperies are used only when the shelf is of a character not to preclude their use. A distinguishing exhibit in the Woman's Handiwork, in one of the most extensive and well appointed of the autumn fairs, consisted of mantel lambréquins. Those intended for parlors were done on plush, billiard cloth and artist's sateen. The work on the plush was in Kensington

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embroidery done with silk and chenille; that on the cloth and sateen was in velvet *appliqué* outlined with Japanese gold thread, couched on. But the handsomest lambrequins on display were those intended for bedrooms of *macramé* lace done with flax *macramé* threads. An ingenious lady shows a mantel and a pair of window lambrequins of *macramé* lace to match, and has in view a small table-cover trimmed with lace of the same design. The work is run with ribbons and finished with silk tassels matching the tints of the paper with which the walls of the room are hung.

MISS JANE D. MORTON: "Will you, if you please, let me know if there is anything new and handsome in tidies, scarfs for bric-a-brac tables, and furnishing of a dainty character?" Dainty and beautiful tidies are made of heavy gros-grain silk, Bengaline and satin, enriched with Russian or cross-stitch embroidery in silk floss. Embroidery designs come stamped on canvas, it being necessary in the work to follow the stamped colors. The canvas must be basted on the silk or satin very carefully, and when the work is done the basting thread is removed and the threads of the canvas drawn out. Table scarfs embroidered in this manner are made of stout satin with linen back, artist's sateen, plush and billiard cloth. Designs of large flowers of bold effect are preferred. A tidy in memory in a design of brilliant martagon lilies, done on gros-grain silk in maize color, is elegant; and a second tidy in maize color showing a magnolia blossom with a few leaves, is equally handsome. For finish, these tidies are raveled out to the depth of an inch and a half at each end, the threads caught in clusters and sewed together, and a silk tassel about five inches deep hung on each point made by bunching the silk.

MISS JULIA L. FARMER. In one of our articles we gave directions for the using up of odds and ends of wools in a sofa blanket, in one of alternate black and hit-and-miss stripes in colors, of the *star-stitch* in crochet. The plain stripe could be still handsomer, perhaps, in dark peacock blue, dark sea-green, or dark cardinal red; the colors in the hit-and-miss stripe should be delicate almost to faintness in any case, and the stripes from seven to eight inches wide.

CORRECT patterns of mouldings and carvings—often valuable in giving those employed in decorative work a clearer idea of projection, or depths, than a drawing would do—may be obtained by using for the purpose the following composition which has the advantage of not injuring any surface. Further, this composition may be employed to remedy any defect in a moulding, being colored to match. It consists of suet one part, beeswax two parts, or whitewax four parts, and turpentine one part. These are to be mixed together and stirred till cool. It must be well pressed into the carving. If the carving or moulding be elaborate it may be necessary to take the impression by sections. The mould when hard is to be filled with plaster of Paris, the inside of the mould having been previously coated with a film of olive oil. On the plaster of Paris hardening the mould is removed.

PLASTIC DECORATION.

OVER the mantel of the Committee Room of the handsome headquarters of the Brooklyn Master Painters' and Decorators' Association, is to be seen a remarkable fine specimen of plastic decoration and color work. It is emblematic in character, and reminds one in its purpose of Hogarth's painting of the "End of Time." It symbolizes the house painter's trade. In the center is an owl perched on the leafless branch of a huge tree, half prostrated, having succumbed to the attack of age. Its claws hold brushes, pencils and a maul stick. Beside a branch sprawling on the ground is an oil can, a paint pot, spattered with different colors, and a kalsomine pail with brush. Above the owl is the legend in silver oxidized letters of a scroll "United We Stand." Slightly upraised by the tree's projecting limbs is a ladder of the old type far gone in decay, the further extremity of the ladder to the right reaching to a sapless, leafless tree that shows signs of having been battered by countless storms. Outside a low cot, near, are two brilliant plumaged cockatoos. The tableau is coated with metallic colors. The border is a frame of imitative bricks discolored by age, the lining being of oxidized silver.

A CIRCUMSTANCE favoring interior decoration is that architects whilst aiming at improved plans of houses with reference to convenience are taking into more full account scenic effects, as in the vistas of corridors, picturesque recesses, pillared dimensions of room and numerous other features. Where the architect ends the decorative painter commences, giving fuller effect to the former's designs. It is his province to render the interior as to color attractive without gaudiness, and reposeful to the sight. Plain white pine of wainscoting and doors assumes under the manipulations of the grainer the appearance of fine natural hardwoods. Mouldings have their full contributory beauties developed by adding color to form. Leafage and scroll work if too bold can have their apparent relief reduced by color, or if too weak brought into greater prominence. Walls are rendered attractive both structurally and as backgrounds, and ceilings to which the eye so often wanders, objects of artistic pleasure. The amount of thought as well as skill that is shown in some of our stately dwellings, is very remarkable both in the selection of predominating hues of different rooms, harmonies of color in analogies and contrasts, and in the general design and details of the work. The profession of the decorator is daily growing in public esteem.

BLACK VARNISH.—A capital black varnish suitable for covering broken places in metal, such as sewing machine furniture, &c., where the japanned surface has been scratched or otherwise damaged, can be made by taking fine lamp black or ivory black, and thoroughly mixing with copal varnish, the black being in a very fine powder. To mix the more readily it might be made into a pasty mass with turpentine.



A PANEL, BY HARRY DEANE.